

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the application. No claim amendments are presented, thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-16 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Bala et al. (U.S. Pub. 2003/0018644, herein Bala); and Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Bala in further view of Kobata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,051,003, herein "Kobata").

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1 and 18 recite novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied reference.

Independent Claim 1 relates to an image forming apparatus including a display unit, and a display information controlling unit configured to control information displayed on the display unit. An interface unit is also included in the image forming apparatus and provides a physical connection with an external apparatus on which an application is implemented. A control unit controls the interface unit and provides a logical connection with the external apparatus. Independent Claim 1 further recites that the image forming apparatus, comprises:

... a relay unit configured to relay between the application and the software, said relaying unit notifying said display information control unit of a display that is to be presented on said display unit to indicate ***ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides the logical connection with the external apparatus.***

Independent Claim 18, while directed to an alternative embodiment, recites substantially similar features. Accordingly, the remarks and arguments presented below are applicable to each of independent Claims 1 and 18.

Turning to the applied reference, Bala describes a method and program storage device for creating tabular data stream flow for sending rows of secure data between a client workstation and a server computer over a network using a common object request broker architecture (CORBA).¹ The method includes receiving a request to create a query form at the client work station, receiving a worksheet grid form defining selected tabular data, and packaging the worksheet grid form representing an updated status of the data for the tabular data stream flow.

Bala, however, fails to teach or suggest that the client device includes “a relay unit configured to relay between the application and the software, said relaying unit notifying said display information controlling unit of a display that is to be presented on said display unit to indicate *ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides the logical connection with the external apparatus*,” as recited in independent Claim 1.

In rejecting the above emphasized features recited in independent Claim 1, the outstanding Office Action relies on paragraphs [0041], [0069], and [0073]-[0074] of Bala. More specifically, the outstanding Office Action, at p. 3, asserts that the client computer workstation 150 of Bala is analogous to the claimed image forming apparatus and the computer server 110 is analogous to the claimed external apparatus. As described at paragraph [0041] the client computer 150 running a browser application, which allows the client computer to access a web server computer 170 containing an initial launch web page for the strategic client planning system. The web server computer 170 also includes a logon applet which is sent to the client workstation upon initial startup of the strategic client planning system and allows the client to establish an initial connection to a database 160 residing on a remote database server computer 110. Thus, paragraph [0041] describes a

¹ Bala, Abstract.

process by which a client computer 150 already connected to a server computer 170 is able to access a database 160 residing on a remote database server computer 110. Accordingly, this cited portion of Bala fails to teach or suggest a relay unit that is configured to present a display on the display unit indicating *ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides the logical connection with the external apparatus*. Instead, this portion of Bala merely describes a process of logging in to a remote database with which a connection is already established by way of a plurality of server computers, and fails to teach or suggest presenting a display indicating ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides a logical connection with the external apparatus.

More particularly, in rejecting the claimed features directed to “said relaying unit notifying said display information controlling unit of a display ...”, the outstanding Office Action relies on paragraphs [0073]-[0074] of Bala. This cited portion of Bala, however, describes that data is downloaded from the database to the client workstation 150 and a user at the client workstation may locally make changes to the database material, but not upload the changes to the database until they are satisfied that the modified plans are ready for use by processes or users executing on the database 160. Once the user is satisfied with the modifications made to the data, the data may be imported to the database for permanent storage.

Thus, Bala describes that the workstation 150, in this instance, already has established a connection to the external database 160, or application, and is manipulating data downloaded from this database. The external application, or database, is already operational and a logical connection is already established with the server 110 storing the remote database 160. Thus, the cited portion of Bala clearly fails to teach or suggest a relay unit that is configured to notify the display of data that is to be presented on the graphical user

interface of the client to indicate *ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides logical connection with the external apparatus*, as recited in independent Claim 1. Instead, as noted above, in the cited portion of Bala, access to the application, or database 160, has already become operational to the user and the client workstation 150 has already established a logical connection with the remote server 110 containing the remote database 160.

Therefore, Bala fails to teach or suggest an image forming apparatus including a relay unit “configured to relay between the application and the software, said relaying unit notifying said display information controlling unit of a display that is to be presented on said display unit to indicate *ongoing preparation of the application until the application becomes operational when said control unit provides the logical connection with the external apparatus*,” as recited in independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 1 (and Claims 2-16 which depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn. For substantially similar reasons, it is also submitted that independent Claim 18 patentably defines over Bala.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Bala in view of Kobata, it is noted that Claim 17 depends from Claim 1, and is believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Kobata fails to cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Bala.

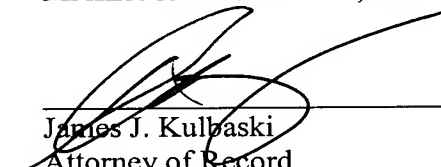
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-8 is patentably distinguishing over the applied references.

The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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